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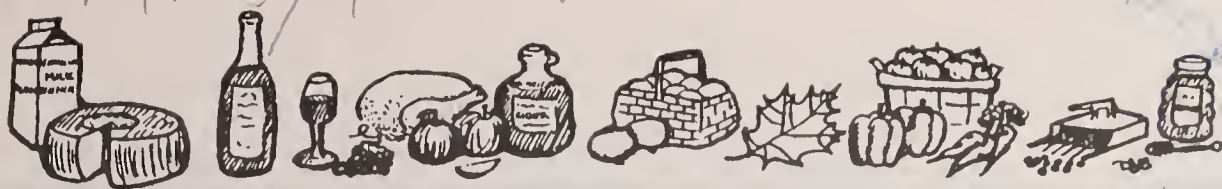


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The Fresh Connection

Spring 1990

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Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture

John P. DeVillars, Secretary of Environmental Affairs

August Schumacher, Jr. Commissioner

The "Green Book:" New Link to Local Growers

The Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture's "Green Book," a 96 page Directory of Wholesale Growers of Massachusetts Grown and Fresher Products is now available. *The Green Book* serves as a resource for businesses looking to use locally grown fruit, vegetables and ornamental crops.

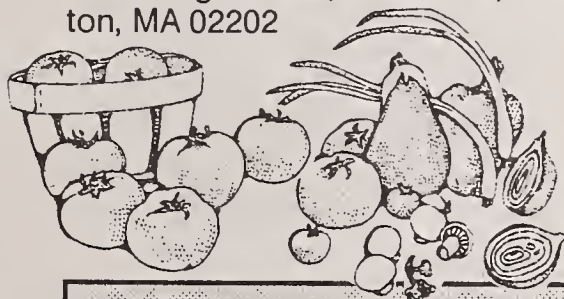
According to Massachusetts Commissioner of Food and Agriculture August Schumacher, Jr., "There is expanding interest among Massachusetts supermarkets and restaurants in using more local produce. *The Green Book* provides a much-needed link between the growers and the buyers."

The Green Book is being sent to supermarket buyers, food co-operatives, restaurants and various institutions, and will be updated annually. This first issue lists nearly 500 growers whose crops range from blackberries to kale to rhubarb to scallions. The book lists growers of 14 varieties of fruit and 28 types of vegetables, as well as growers of Christmas trees, bedding plants, cut-flowers, poinsettias, dried flowers, cider producers and wreath makers.

One buying segment which could benefit greatly from the *Green Book* and which hasn't been specifically targeted in the past is institutional foodservice. "We expect the book to facilitate increased sales of locally grown crops," says Schumacher. "Institutions such as schools, hospitals and retirement

communities should now be better able to take advantage of Massachusetts produce and help themselves to fresher products while supporting the state's farmers."

To obtain a copy of the 1990 *Green Book*, send a self-addressed, double-stamped, 10" X 12.5" envelope to: Green Book, Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture, 100 Cambridge Street, 21st Floor, Boston, MA 02202



Inside this Issue

- What's Available Now , page 2
- Food, Nutrition, and Restaurants: Moving into the 90's, page 3
- "Cultured" Orchids and Easter Lilies for Better Blooms, page 3
- Massachusetts Wine -- it's Time!, page 4
- The Time is Right Calendar, page 3

Boston Area Hotels Feature Bay State Bounty

The Boston Harbor Hotel and the Charles Hotel in Cambridge are featuring local produce, both on the menu and in farmers' markets.

Massachusetts produce and cheeses receive rave reviews from Boston Harbor Hotel Executive Manager Jim Carmody. "We use a lot of Massachusetts products in our kitchen. Last summer 80% of our produce was local. The quality of the vegetables, fruits and cheeses are exceptional."

The hotel, which began using contract growers last summer, has found the service beneficial. "The farmers are willing and able to grow to our specifications and deliver the products to us in a much fresher state. The extra level of care used by the farmers translates into a better plate for our customers with a more unique and better tasting meal--and they notice the improved taste, color and texture of our food."

The Boston Harbor Hotel will use Massachusetts products in the coming months, and also host a Rows Wharf Farmers' Market - "A New England Sampler," for the public May 25 to 28.

The Charles Hotel has been working with local farmers for many years and has developed recipes that feature Massachusetts products. New this year, the Hotel will coordinate a full-fledged farmers' market in the courtyard during the first Sunday of each month, starting June 3.

WHAT'S AVAILABLE NOW...

- **Apples, fresh pressed cider, and butternut squash** are still in season; contact the Department for nearby producers: (617) 727-3018.
- It's not too early to order **nasturtiums** (edible!) and a variety of organic **herbs**, available mid-June from Rachel Nadeau in Westminster. Nadeau, who grows approximately 24 kinds of herbs on 1/2 acre of land, delivers to restaurants, the Fitchburg farmers' market (Tuesdays and Fridays) and the Gardner farmers' market (Thursdays) throughout the summer. "I love growing and using herbs; they really enhance the flavors of food--and without adding extra calories." Call Nadeau at (508) 874-2549.
- Czepiel Dairy of Ludlow will offer a new line of **soft-serve frozen yogurt mixes** in late March. Czepiel Dairy products are made with all-Jersey milk. Delivery can be arranged. Place orders for the frozen yogurt mixes and other Czepiel products (cottage cheese, sour cream, buttermilk, cream cheese, yogurt, ice cream mixes) by calling 1 (800) 553-9330.
- "**Popeye**" **spinach**, available mid-May from Sergi Farms, Medford. Anthony Sergi, whose family has been in the business since 1920, will have over 50,000 spinach plants. "My spinach sells out quickly--it's best to get here as soon as it's ready." If you're in the market for "anything Italian," Sergi also grows Italian Romano **pole-beans**, Genovese and Neapolitan **basil** and a variety of **tomatoes**; all can be contract grown for mid-summer and early fall harvest. For date of spinach availability and delivery information, call (617) 396-0473.
- Joe Czajkowski has **peeled carrots** available year-round. **Serrated carrot coins and carrot sticks** are among the choices, and of course, whole carrots. **Romaine lettuce** and **strawberries** will also be ready in June. "Our good soil produces a really nice product," says Czajkowski. Delivery arranged for large orders. To order, call (413) 549-0805.
- "State of the art" **raspberries** will be available in mid-July from Sidney Sisselman of Pittsfield. Each of his five raspberry varieties, all grown from selective tissue cultures, are "by nature the best," according to Sisselman. Striving for higher quality rather than quantity, Sisselman grows some varieties of the berries to "the size of strawberries," which are perfect for desserts and other dishes where the size of the raspberry will be appreciated. Sisselman's "special raspberries for special restaurants" enjoy a 6-8 week season beginning around July 18. To make an appointment for deciding a berry variety, pick-date and delivery time to the Boston area, call (413) 442-0298. Now is the perfect time to order!
- Bay State **farmers' markets** offer Massachusetts-grown produce all summer long. Restaurateurs who visit farmers' markets can choose from a wide selection of the freshest fruits and vegetables, and make valuable contacts with local farmers. To obtain the updated list of farmers' markets for the 1990 season, send a self-addressed, stamped, business-size envelope to: Farmers' Market List, Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture, 100 Cambridge Street, 21st Floor, Boston, MA 02202.
- It's time for **Massachusetts maple syrup**. The combination of warm days and cold nights cause the sap to run in maple trees, resulting in delicious Massachusetts maple syrup. It

takes some 40 gallons of sap to make a gallon of maple syrup. A day trip to a Bay State sugar house offers an educational experience and a treat for the taste buds! Using maple syrup as an ingredient adds a touch of distinction to any restaurant menu. For a list of local maple producers and sugarhouses, call the Department.

- Locally grown flowers will soon be plentiful, and add beauty to any eating establishment. For a copy of the MA Flower Growers' Association Directory and Buyers Guide, call Bob Luczai: (508)369-4847.

What's New with the WMFIA?

The Western Massachusetts Food Industry Association (WMFIA), representing some 60 food manufacturers of varying size, is ready for a productive season with a brand new Board of Directors, officers and four very active committees.

The second edition of the WMFIA product directory is in development and will be available in the fall of 1990, according to WMFIA Sean Wagner. The new directory, boasting an updated and expanded member list and a new look, is sure to be a boon to anyone interested in obtaining locally grown and produced food items. In the meantime, if you haven't received the first directory, call the Association: (413) 549-4930 ext. 303.

The Fresh Connection

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Food, Nutrition and Restaurants: *Moving into the 90s*

The 1990's will be an exciting time for the nutrition community and the food and hospitality industries. Scientific discoveries will translate into new markets for increasingly sophisticated foods, and consumers will continue to patronize restaurants that serve tasty, healthy food--and at the same time-- rich, chocolate desserts!

The Massachusetts restaurant industry boomed in the early to mid-80's and then slowed a little in the late part of the decade. According to experts, patrons, while appreciative of originality, will no longer feel the need to eat trendy food. To be sure, an increased demand for health-conscious entrees will occur. New research on the role of genetics in diseases such as cancer, hypertension and heart disease will allow for more individualized nutrition advice.

The 80s brought us oat bran and Omega-3 fatty acids, calcium-fortified orange juice and olive oil. And, along with increased public knowledge regarding food and health, the 80s brought an increase in "premium" and "gourmet" food consumption. The dramatic rise in

public consciousness about the link between eating right and staying healthy was reflected in consumer knowledge, but less so in practice. But what can we expect from nutrition in the 90s?

According to experts, cholesterol will continue to be a major health concern. Oat bran, in all conceivable disguises will still be seen on the supermarket shelves, but psyllium, another cholesterol-lowering soluble fiber may gain in popularity. And dried beans will be more favorably looked upon as consumers realize that they contain the same soluble fiber as oat bran.

Fat consumption may overtake cholesterol as the main heart-stopping concern. Evidence for the nation's growing "fear of fat" has already been approved by the U.S.D.A. Simplesse, the fat substitute from the NutraSweet Company, will show up soon in foods such as ice cream and sour cream. And a second "fake" fat, called Olestra, is currently being tested for use in cooked and heated products like French fries and pie crust.

Even though consumers will have the opportunity to purchase

reduced-fat and no-fat products, health professionals are not completely convinced that total fat consumption will decrease in this country. Even though sugar substitutes are common now, the national consumption of sweeteners has increased to a record high. It is thought that artificial fats will follow the same scenario.

It's all good news for fresh fruits and vegetables, which often don't get enough of the spotlight, considering the low-fat, nutrient dense composition of produce.

CALENDAR AVAILABLE

The time is now to get your 1990 "The Time Is Right For Massachusetts" calendar. The cheery yellow, poster-sized calendar details the week-by-week availability of Bay State products from parsnips to poinsettias. To claim your copy, contact the Department, (617)727-3018.

Lilies and Orchids For Better Blooms

Victor DeRosa started his flower business in 1947. Today, as the largest retail and wholesale florist in the Natick area, he devotes 45,000 square feet to his passion: orchids.

Despite the common notion that orchids are too temperamental for the average person to own, DeRosa maintains that "Orchids are not hard to care for once they have adapted to their environment." Using orchids in a restaurant setting would require appropriate light and heat conditions. In the right restaurant, certain orchids could thrive, but a consultation is necessary to determine the restaurant environment and the variety of orchid best suited to that particular growth atmosphere. The unique and exotic beauty of orchids may be well worth the effort of an initial consultation.

DeRosa Orchids has made it easier for people to care for orchids through a process known as mericloneing. Mericloneing is a time-consuming and intricate

process that involves dissecting a segment of a choice orchid plant, treating it with chemicals and vitamins and holding it in a sterile flask for 10-14 days. "If you're lucky, the plant grows and you're in business," says DeRosa. Even so, it will be another 3-5 years until the plants grown from the original group of cells will flower.

The mericloneing process results in a higher quality flower that looks better and lasts longer. It's different from crossbreeding in that we know exactly what qualities the new plants will have," DeRosa explains. And judging from the increasing popularity of the Phalaenopsis orchid, the demand for better-quality orchids, like those from Victor DeRosa Orchids, will continue.

Easter lilies will be available starting April 1st. Geraniums and a variety of annuals are also grown by DeRosa. Delivery can be arranged for large orders. Call (508) 653-6530.

Calendar

Don't miss the 1990 **New England Dairy and Deli Association's Annual Dairy-Deli-Bakery Taste Show & Seminar**, April 17 and 18 the Bayside Exposition Center. A group of Massachusetts food manufacturers and producers will be among the exhibitors. The exposition will also be the forum for new trends, concepts, merchandising ideas and products in the dairy, deli and bakery business. This trade-only event promises over 7,000 customers to view some 400 food manufacturers products.

Join us at the 1990 **Northeast Foodservice and Lodging Exposition and Conference**, April 22 to 24 at the Bayside Exposition Center in Boston. The conference is expected to attract upwards of 25,000 attendees and over 550 exhibitors. Be sure to stop by the Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture booth, #2423, featuring a sampling of Massachusetts' great variety of grower and food processor products. Commodity and Farmers' Market listings will be available, and requests for the Green Book will be taken.

New Bedford Wholesaler Connects Chefs and Growers

"We're trying to coordinate the best chefs with the best growers," says Henry Wainer of Sid Wainer Specialty Produce, New Bedford. Considering the current popularity of local regional cuisine, Wainer believes it only makes sense to offer restaurants and hotels the freshest Massachusetts-grown produce.

Wainer, in the wholesale produce business for the past 30 years, believes his operation matches chefs and growers for a mutually beneficial association. "We give chefs the produce they're looking for," says Wainer, who also provides farmers with a marketing outlet for specialty fruits and vegetables.

Wainer also offers chefs a "4-Season Menu Planner," which lists the projected weekly availability of over 500 items, available to restaurateurs upon request. In addition, chefs can request that specific crops be locally grown through Wainer's operation. Local farmers are always welcome to discuss the terms for growing crops for Specialty Produce. Call 1 (800) 423-8333.

Massachusetts Wine--it's Time!

The "small but dedicated" Bay State wine industry is represented by only 7-10 wineries, according to Massachusetts Wine Producers Association (MWPA) President, Jack Partridge.

Although small in number, the state's wineries produce a great variety of wines. Massachusetts wineries offer both grape wines and fruit wines. "There are many types of fruit wines," says Partridge, "they range from apple to blueberry to plum--there's even a producer of hard cider."

Increasing interest in wine and wine production has prompted most of the Massachusetts wineries to offer tours and tastings. Each tour and each tasting goes one step further toward helping the MWPA achieve its goal of "promoting consumer interest in Massachusetts wine." Rising consumer interest in the state's wines also bodes well for restaurateurs who can benefit from offering a variety of unique local wines.

Most Massachusetts wines are sold in retail outlets; however, some are available only from the winery. For information about Massachusetts wines and wineries, call the Massachusetts Wine Producers Association at (508) 779-5521.

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